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NATURAL MAGIC:

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PHYSICAL AMUSEMENTS

R E V E A L E D,

By *P H I L I P A S T L E Y*,

R I D I N G - M A S T E R,

W E S T M I N S T E R - B R I D G E,

L O N D O N;

Great Part of which are intended to be
added to the several Entertainments of
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Price 2s. 6d.

NATURAL MAGIC

OF

THEYRON'S AMUSEMENTS

BY J. A. L. E. D.

THE PHILIP MASTER

RIDING MASTER

WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

L O W D O W

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The Author's Preface.

TH E greatest Pleasure we can enjoy,
after having been amused with Objects
that excite our Curiosity, is its Gratification.

This powerful Motive induces me to offer
this little Work to the Public, whose generous
support has raised me to my present Station in
Life: However, the Reader must not hope,
that after having spent half an Hour in perus-
ing it, he will be able to do the Tricks as
expertly, as Persons who have acquired their
Facility from Practice of many Years. Nei-
ther must it be expected that I shall give here
a particular Description of all the Pieces, that
may serve to excite Admiration, and produce
Astonishment!

Details of this Nature, would make up a
very voluminous Work, and the Cuts necessary
to such an Undertaking, would render it at
the same Time very Expensive.*

I purpose only to satisfy the intelligent Rea-
der's Curiosity, by shewing him all the Springs

* The Author of this Book (Mr. ASTLEY) has
been near seven Years writing and compiling his
general Practice of training the Horse for different
Purposes, with Engravings, and has not yet com-
pleted half.

put

put into Motion, to amuse and divert him. It is more interesting than any Person would think, to unfold these little Mysteries: when an unknown Cause produces striking Effects, the human Mind, naturally fond of the Marvellous, often ascribe them to an imaginary one.

If the Person who operates or relates these wonderful Effects, be an eloquent Impostor, then, weak Minds may adapt pernicious Prejudices, and fall into Errors and Extravagancies that appear fabulous to reasonable Beings. I could recite several Examples, but I shall content myself with saying, that I formerly knew a Person, who received every Week upwards of fifty Letters, in which Credulity and blind Stupidity, seriously marked the present and future Events.

Finally, I am aware of thinking myself incapable of enlightening the Public, so far as to diminish its Pleasures, by giving a Disgust for a Species of Entertainment, in which the Impostition of the Actor, and the Credulity of the Spectator are equally necessary, and of which the Charm entirely consists.

Felix qui potuit rerum Cognosci Causas.

VIRG. GEORG.

NATURAL

NATURAL MAGIC:

PHYSICAL AMUSEMENTS

REVEALED

EXPERIMENT the First.

The GRAND SULTAN.

THIS Trick has been long known and exhibited at *Westminster - Bridge*, under the Name of *The little learned Turk*: It is an Automaton Figure, of about 17 or 18 Inches high, holding a little Hammer in his Hand, with which he strikes a small Bell. At first he is taken off the Magical Table, or Pedestal, and presented to the Company to shew that he has no Communication with any one: And being put again in his Place, the Conjuror asks him, if he will salute his Master: the little Turk answers negatively, by a turn of his Head: A Moment after he is asked again, if he will salute the Company, to which he answers by

8. NATURAL MAGIC: OR,

an affirmative Bow. A Pack of Cards is presented to one of the Spectators, who is desired to draw one of them at Random; and the Conjuror, without seeing the Card, or approaching the Automaton, orders him to discover it, which he does by a Number of Strokes upon the Bell, in nearly the same Manner as the little learned Horse does with his Foot: Then being asked whether the Card chosen is Hearts, Diamonds, Spades, or Clubs; as the Suits are named he makes an affirmative or negative Sign with his Head, and his Answers are always conformable to the Truth. He indicates also the Point brought by a Cast of uncogged Dice, and he anticipates the Point to be produced by a second Throw. One of the Company having hid a little Image in a Box, divided into several Cells, he demonstrates the Number of the Cells in which the little Puppet is concealed; and to terminate this Trick in a ludicrous Manner, when he is asked who is the most Amorous of all the Company, he generally pitches upon some superannuated Person, which occasions much Raillery and Laughter.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

The Magical Table, on which the little Turk is placed, is generally covered with Canvas, green Baize, or a Carpet, that hides three or more Traps, Conductors or Leavers, similar to those used in Pantomimes; these Traps, &c. work with Wires, passing

passing through the Legs (which are hollow) of the Table, to the Agent underneath the Stage, or any distant Place to favour the Experiment, in like Manner as Bells are hung from one Chamber to another.

The *little Turk* being placed on a Pedestal, on the Inside and Bottom of which are three Valves, which are put in Motion by the Pressure of the Trap on the Valves, in the same Manner as you would cause your Watch to repeat.

The first Valve moves the Head to an affirmative Sign, the second a Negative, and the third to move the Arm, to strike the Bell, to discover the Number of the Company present, the Number of Spots on any Card, Number of Cards drawn, &c. &c. The two Figures at *St. Dunstan's Church* that strike the Quarters, prove this no new Experiment; for they, and only they, furnished me with the Idea, which I put in general Practice, in Conjunction with my *little learned, or Conjuring Horse*, in the Year 1765, at *Westminster-Bridge*. Not long after, the Public must remember I had the Misfortune to be taken by a Warrant, and all my Servants, Horse and Foot, sent to *Bridewell*, and myself admitted to Bail. At the following general Assizes at *Kingston*, I surrendered to take my Tryal, and the *little learned Horse*, and the *little Turk*, with the *Magical or Mechanical Table*, being

GO NATURAL MAGIC: or,

mentioned by the Council, threw the whole Court into great good Humour; Mr. *Howarth* and Mr. *Lade* (my Council) declared I only borrowed the Idea from the Figures at St. *Dunstan's* Church, and my Intentions appearing perfectly innocent, I was acquitted of the supposed Crime of dealing with the Devil. However, the invisible Agent, fully acquainted with the Operator, knows all his private Signals, as Ships of War, in an Engagement; the turn of his Body, right or left, the Disposition of his right or left Hand, furnishes the invisible Agent with sufficient Instruction to pull the Wire, and work the *little Turk*, conformable to the Experiment then exhibiting, for he always has a View of his Master through some Aperture or other. As there are only from one to ten Spots, and four Suits, necessary to be observed to discover the Card appointed, the Number of Signals are but Fourteen: Any Person who has seen my *little learned Horse*, the learned Mr. *Breslaw*, the ingenious Mr. *Pinetti*, and many other sagacious Performers, is thoroughly acquainted with the Manner of forcing and slipping Cards, &c. to furnish Matter sufficient for a Discovery; and thus deceive the Spectators: But should any one require a personal Explanation, they may be satisfied by attending at my Riding-School, *Westminster-Bridge, London.*

EXPERI-

EXPERIMENT the Second.

THE HANDKERCHIEF MARKED, CUT, TORN,
and MENDED.

Two Persons of the Company are desired to step forwards on the Stage; a Handkerchief is given them, which they are to hold by the four Corners; several other Handkerchiefs are asked from the Company, and as they are received, they are put within the First, in order to make them a Bundle; when there are about a Dozen of them heaped up together, the two Persons who hold the Bundle, cause one of them to be drawn at Random, by a third Spectator; this last is desired to examine its Mark and Number, if any such there be, and to cut off one of the Corners, with a Pair of Scissars; any one may cut a Piece also; after that the Handkerchief is torn in Pieces: The Bits and Scraps being gathered together, on which are poured certain pretended Drugs or Liquors; all are folded and firmly bound with a Ribbond, in order to reduce them to a small Parcel, then they are put under a Glass; a few Moments after the Handkerchief is taken to be unfolded, and every Body acknowledges the Mark, and the Spectators are surprized to see it has not received the least Damage in the Operation.

EXPLANATION.

This Operation which produces so general an Illusion is very simple: One of the Company with whom the Juggler is acquainted, having two Handkerchiefs perfectly alike, having previously deposited one of them in the Hands of the Compeer concealed behind the Curtain, throws the other upon the Stage to perform the Trick with: The Operator takes Care to put this Handkerchief uppermost in making the Bundle, though he affects to mix them together promiscuously; the Person whom he desires to draw one of the Handkerchiefs, takes naturally that which comes first to Hand; he desires to shake them again, on Pretence to embellish the Operation: The Juggler having shaken them over again himself, to bring the right Handkerchief uppermost, desires somebody less penetrating, whose Mien denotes Simplicity, and who in putting his Hand into the Bundle, takes without Ceremony the first that presents itself. When the Handkerchief is torn and carefully folded up, it is put under a Glass, on a Table placed near a Partition; in that Part of the Table on which it is deposited, is a little Trap, which opens, and lets it fall into a Drawer; the Compeer hid behind the Curtain passes his Hand within the Table, opens the Trap, and substitutes a second Handkerchief

kerchief, instead of the First, then shuts the Trap, which fits so exactly the Hole it closes, it seems one and the same Piece with the Surface of the Table, and deceives by this Means the Eyes of the most incredulous and penetrating Spectator:

EXPERIMENT the Third.

The ARTIFICIAL BIRD, SINGING at the COMPANY'S COMMAND.

This Bird perched on a Bottle, sings without any preliminary Exercise any Tune demanded of him, even composed upon the Spot, by the most consummate Musicians: He sings equally as well when transported from one Bottle to another upon different Tables: The Wind issuing out of his Beak is strong enough to extinguish a Candle, and to rekindle it; this may be done when he is even taken away from the Bottle and held in the Hand.

EXPLANATION.

Behind the Curtain, a Part of which covers the Partition, are two hollow metal Cones, these Cones which are unequal, serve the Compeer as a speaking Trumpet, in the same Manner as the speaking Figure lately exhibited in *London*. The Compeer imitating

imitating the Voice of a Bird, as the celebrated *Rossignol*, and follows the Tunes which the Musicians play by Heart, or from a Music Book laid before them; if the Tune proposed should be too difficult for the Musicians and the Compeer to execute, without previous Exercise, the Company is informed, that to render the Trick more surprizing, the Bird will begin, by singing some Tune well known, from which it will pass suddenly to the Tune in Question: This is done to gain Time; some of the Musicians avail themselves of the Interval, by observing more particularly the Music, and the Compeer makes use of the two different Echoes, to convey his Voice to two different Points, according to the Table and Bottle on which the Bird stands. The Bird contains in its Belly a little double Pair of Bellows, like those of a Serenatta, and between its Feet is a moveable Pin which works the Bellows; this Pin in entering the Neck of the Bottle, leans on a Piece of Wood, which cannot be perceived, from the Bottle's Opacity: This Piece laying vertically on the moveable Bottom of the Bottle, can easily move the Bellows, and be made to move by the Engines placed under the Carpet, when the Compeer draws the Wire concealed in the Feet of the Table; by this Means the Bellows are moved to extinguish the Candle, and to convince the Spectators that the Voice is really formed

ed in the Birds Throat, by the Wind that issues forth from his Beak. When the Conjurer takes the Bird in his Hand, he works the Bellows himself with his Thumb, and the Wind extinguishing the Candle, persuades the Company that the Bird sings, independent of the Machine concealed in the Table and behind the Partition: The Candle being but just extinguished, and the Wick still hot, cannot possibly approach the Bird's Beak without being illuminated; for Care is taken to put a little Flower of Brimstone in it, which produces the Effects of a Match.

EXPERIMENT the Fourth.

The DANCING CARD.

One of the Company is desired to draw a Card, which the Conjurer shuffles again with the Others, and then orders it to appear upon the Wall; the Card instantly obeys, then advancing by Degrees, and according to Orders, it ascends in a straight Line, from right to left; it disappears on the Top of the Wall, and a Moment after it appears again, and continues to Dance upon an horizontal Line, &c. &c.

EXPLA-

EXPLANATION.

This Trick is so simple, that I could have dispensed with speaking of it; it consists in the first Place, in obtaining a forced Card drawn, which is easily known by the Card being larger than the rest; after having shuffled it with the Others, it is taken out of the Pack, the better to impose upon the Company: The Instant it is ordered to appear on the Wall, the Compeer or invisible Agent very expertly draws a Thread, at the End of which is fastened a similar Card, which comes out from behind a Glass; another Thread drawn very tight, on which it slides, by the Means of some very small silk Rings fastened, running thereon, prescribes its Motion and Progress.

Si parva hiet componere Magnis.

EXPERIMENT the Fifth.

THE CARD NAILED to the WALL with a
PISTOL-SHOT.

The Conjuror obtains a Card drawn, and requests the Person who has chosen it, to tear off one of its Corners, and to observe it well to know it again; he takes the Card thus torn and tears it all to Pieces, burns it, and reduces it to Ashes; He then gets a Pistol loaded with Powder, mixed
and

and confounded with the said Ashes, and instead of a leaden Ball, a Nail, marked by one of the Company, is put into the Barrel; then the Pack of Cards is thrown up into the Air, the Pistol is fired, and the burnt Card is found nailed against the Wall, the Piece torn from it is then produced, and found to fit exactly the Place from whence it was torn, and the Nail is acknowledged to be the same, by the Person who marked it.

EXPLANATION.

A Corner of the chosen Card being torn, the Conjuror steps into his Closet, takes a similar Card and tears a Corner of it exactly in the same Manner; returning on the Stage, he asks for the chosen Card, places it subtly under the Pack, and expertly substitutes that which he has prepared, in order to burn it in its stead; he then lays hold of the Pistol for the first Time, under Pretence of shewing how it should be cocked, fired, and handled; one of the Company is then desired to load the Pistol with some Powder and Paper; he seizes this Interval to convey the Card to his invisible Agent, who speedily nails it upon a square Piece of Board, which serves to shut up hermetically a Hole made in the Partition and the Hangings, but which is invisible, being covered with a Piece of the same; by this Means the Card nailed to the Wall or Partition does not yet appear;

appear; the Piece of Tapestry with which it is covered is slightly fastened on one Side with two Pins, and on the other to a Thread, the loose End of which the Compeer holds in his Hand: As soon as this last hears the Pistol fired, he draws the Thread, and rapidly transports the Piece of Tapestry behind the Glass, the Card consequently appears, and as it is the same that had been marked with the Nail just put into the Pistol, it is no Wonder that this Trick, so difficult to account for, obtains the Applause of a numerous Assembly: It depends intirely on first loading the Pistol with Powder, after which a Tin Tube is covered on the Charge of Powder, the Card and Nail being rammed down in the Tin Tube; the Pistol being inverted, the Tube and its Contents fall into the Conjurer's Hand to convey to his invisible Agent.

N. B. If any one should suspect that the Nail in the Pistol has been juggled, his Suspicion is protested against, and he is desired to come again the next Day to be convinced of his Error; then he is presented with a Pistol which is taken to Pieces, to shew him that there is not the least Preparation.

EXPE-

EXPERIMENT the Sixth.**The BURNT CARD SHUT UP IN A WATCH.**

Here the Conjuror presents the Company with a Pack of Cards, and gets one of them drawn at Random; he borrows three Watches, which one of the Spectators is desired to fold up in three different Pieces of Paper; they are then laid on a Table and covered with a Napkin; the chosen Card is burnt, and its Ashes are put into a Box; shortly after the Box is opened, but the Ashes are gone: the three Watches are laid on a Plate, and one of the Company is desired to choose one of them and open it, in which he finds under the Glass a Piece of the burnt Card, and under the Watch-Case, a small Card, representing in Miniature, that reduced to Ashes.

EXPLANATION.

The chosen Card is known directly by the Disposition of the Pack mentioned in the first Experiment; the Watches well enveloped in Paper, are laid on the little Trap spoken of in the second Experiment: as soon as the Compeer is acquainted with the Card drawn, he stretches out his Arm under the Table and takes one of the Watches, in which he deposits the Card, destined to be produced

C

duced before the Company: the Watches should be covered with a Napkin, sustained by several Bottles, or something similar, otherwise the Compeer's Hand would be perceived moving the Napkin. The three Watches are presented to a By-Stander upon a Plate, with Care to turn next to him that which contains the Card in Miniature, and which is marked by having a little of its Corner torn: If the Person should be cunning, and waggishly affects to take the Watch next to him, he is desired to mix and confound them well together, under the Pretence of embellishing the Trick, and the Stratagem spoken of in Experiment the Second, is put in Execution. The Method of causing the Ashes of a burnt Card to disappear in a Box, consists in depositing a bit of Wood or Pasteboard within the Lid, which fills it exactly in Length and Breadth, and which nevertheless is loose enough to fall down into the Bottom of the Box when it is shut; the Piece of Wood or Pasteboard being of the same Colour as the Inside of the Box, forms a double Bottom, hides the Ashes from the Eyes of the dazzled Spectator, who in the same Moment is induced to think that the Ashes are taken out in order to be combined anew, to produce the Card in Miniature, which is found in the Watch.

EXPE.

EXPERIMENT the Seventh.

The Piece of Money shut up in a Box, from whence it escapes without its being touched.

One of the Company is intreated to hold a Box, into which a Piece of Money or a Ring is deposited in his Presence; the Conjuror withdraws from the Person, and begs of him to shake the Box a little, when the Piece is consequently heard to rattle within. At the third Shake it is still heard, but at the fourth, it is no more in the Box, for it is found in the Shoe of one of the Company.

EXPLANATION.

Every Conjuror carries a Quantity of these Boxes about for Sale; that which caused so much Admiration in *London*, differs from the others only in being a little better made, and belonging to a Man who knows how to embellish his Tricks by all Sorts of favourable Circumstances. This Box is made so, that in shaking it softly up and down, you hear the Piece it contains—but in shaking it strongly in an horizontal Direction, a little Spring falls upon the Piece, and hinders it from sounding, which excites the Opinion of its being no more therein. He who does the Trick, then touches the Box, on Pretence of shewing how it should be shaken;

shaken; and though it be locked, the Piece drops into your Hand, through a little Chink, which opens secretly. He leaves the Box with the same Person, and causes the Company to imagine the Piece is still in the Box, or it is not, according to the Manner in which it is shaken. In fine, he causes the Piece to be found in the Shoe of a Person who is, or is not, in Correspondence with him, and has furnished him with a similar Piece; or by sending some Person to slip it dexterously over the Floor. In this last Case it is found on the Ground only, and the Person is made to believe that he let it fall in taking off his Shoe.

EXPERIMENT the Eighth.

The Writing concealed in a Snuff Box, from whence it is taken out, without touching the Box, and found in a Wax Candle.

The Conjuror borrows a Snuff Box from one of the Company, who he desires to write a Phrase of his own Choice, on a little Piece of Paper. This Writing is put into the Box; another Person soon after takes it out, reduced to Ashes, and at last, it is caused to be found in a Wax Candle, at the Choice of one of the Spectators.

EXPLA-

E X P L A N A T I O N.

The Box borrowed should be neither Gold, Silver, nor hinged. A plain round Box of Paste-board will suffice, of which the inside is blackish, and whose Lid may be taken off. While the Spectator writes the Phrase, the Lid is conveyed away into the adjacent Closet. It is quickly placed there upon a Sheet of Lead, which is cut round with a Pair of Scissars, to make a double Bottom similar to that specified in the sixth Experiment. It is put into the Lid with a little Piece of Paper, folded up in four, hid underneath it. The Conjuror returns on the Theatre, and gets the written Paper folded up, in the same Manner as that concealed in the Lid. The Spectator is desired to put his Writing in the Snuff Box; then it is covered, and the double Bottom, which the Lid contains, falls into the Box, hides the Writing, and leaves visible only the other Paper. In taking this Paper, in order to burn it, the Spectator is duped, for he innocently leaves his Writing in the Box. Then he is desired to put this false Paper into a Tin Shovel, and to present it to the Flames, in order to burn it, and to hold it at a certain Distance to heat slowly. This last Circumstance is only a Pretence to gain Time, while the Conjuror carries the Box and the Writing to his Closet: he has there a

Wax Candle prepared, of which one end, like those of Church Tapers, is pierced with an Iron of a conic Form. It is in this hollow Cone he puts hastily the Writing in Question, and fills up the Aperture with some warm Wax, the better to incorporate with the Candle. He mixes and confounds this Candle with several others, and causes it to be chosen preferably, by Means of the Stratagem mentioned in the second Experiment.

The same Means are employed to produce the Writing in an Orange, a Guinea in a Casket, or a Lemon, &c. &c.

EXPERIMENT the Ninth.

Three Pen Knives having been put into a Silver Cup, One of which jumps out at the Command of any of the Spectators.

Three Pen Knives are borrowed from different Persons of the Company; they are put into a Cup which stands upon a Table; it is shewn that the Table has no Communication with the Cup, and that this last contains no Kind of Preparation; nevertheless, one of the Knives, at any one of the Spectator's Desire, jumps upon the Ground, and the other two remain Motionless.

EXPLA-

E X P L A N A T I O N.

When the Cup is laid upon the Table, a Half Crown Piece is slip't into the Bottom of it, fastened in the Middle to a small black Silk Thread. This Thread mounts perpendicularly to the Ceiling, and goes to join the Hand of the Compeer, who draws the Thread upon a Moment's Notice, and dexterously makes that Pen Knife jump out of the Middle, which was the only one placed on the Half Crown Piece; the others fall immediately to the Bottom of the Cup.

E X P E R I M E N T the Tenth.

The D A N C E of the E G G.

Three Eggs are carried upon the Stage; two are laid upon the Table; the third is put into a Hat. A little Cane, or a Switch, borrowed from one of the Company, which is shewn, not to have been in any Manner prepared, is laid across the Hat; at the same Instant the Hat falls down upon the Ground, the Egg adheres fast to the Cane, as if it were glued to it; then the Music begins to play, and the Egg, as if sensible of the Harmony, slips in turning from one End of the Cane to the other, and continues to move till the Music ceases.

EXPLA-

26 N A T U R A L M A G I C : or,
E X P L A N A T I O N .

The Egg is fastened to a Thread, with a little Peg, put in lengthways, and which leans transversly upon the inside Surface of the Shell. The Hole made to introduce the Peg, is stopt up with a little white Wax. The other End of the Thread is fastened to the Conjurer's Chest of his Body, with a Pin bent in the Form of a Hook; the Cane passing underneath the Thread, very near the Egg, serves to support it. As soon as the Music begins the Conjurer pushes the Cane from left to right, or from right to left, and moves his Body unperceived, and at first Sight the Egg seems to run along the Cane, without any visible Assistance; but this is only a Delusion of the Sight, for it is constantly fastened to the Thread; its Centre of Gravity remains always at the same Distance from the Hook which retains it; it is the Cane, which in sliding presents, successively, its different Points to the Surface of the Egg, as it moves or dances.

EXPERIMENT the Eleventh.

Of the BIRD'S DEATH, and RESURRECTION.

The Egg chosen out of the three, to dance on the Cane, being broken, but presently changed by the Conjurer to the real Egg, to shew that it had not been previously prepared, the two others left upon the Table, are taken up; one of which is
chosen

chosen by a Spectator, and, in breaking out flies a living Canary Bird. A Lady of the Company is desired to take the Bird into her Hand, and soon after it is found to be dead. Then it is taken from her, and laid under a Glass upon a Table; some Minutes after the Glass is taken off, and the Bird flies away.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

Two Eggs are emptied, and the half of the Shells are taken and adjusted together with two little Strips of Paper, glued in the Form of a Zone, or an Equator. Being thus prepared, they represent an Egg, and can contain a little living Canary Bird, provided a little Hole be made in it with a Pin, to permit its free Respiration.

The Instant this Bird is delivered into the Hands of a Person who condescends to hold it, the Conjuror stifles it by a hard Squeeze between his Finger and Thumb. It is then put under a Glass, upon the Trap before-mentioned, in the first Experiment, that the Compeer may place a living one in its Stead.

EXPERIMENT the Twelfth.

The GOLDEN HEAD on three Rings, Dancing and Jumping in a Glass, to answer different Questions.

To shew that this Head is desolate and void of Communication, several Crown Pieces are placed in the Bottom of a Glass, covered with a close Lid, which notwithstanding, does not hinder this Head, described to be of massy Gold, to jump into the Glass, to answer many Questions proposed. At the same Time a Bunch of Rings, seen in another Glass at a little Distance, perform the same Motions, as by Sympathy.

EXPLANATION.

A second Head is put in the Place of the First shewn to the Company, and taken off the Table on which the Operation is to be made: This second Head is fastened to a Silk Thread, which, passing through the Table, reaches under the Stage to join the Compeer, who dances either the Rings, or Head at Pleasure, in order to correspond properly with the Conjuror; and the Rings jump in like Manner at Pleasure.

EXPERIMENT the Thirteenth.

The RINGS passed on a DOUBLE RIBBOND.

In a great Number of Rings furnished by the Company, two Ribbons are introduced, of which the Ends are given to two Couple of the Spectators to hold; soon after, without hurting the Ribbons, and without taking off the Rings over either of the Ends, they are loosed from the Ribbons, and returned to their Owners.

These Strings or Ribbons, with the Balls, or Beads, are sold at most Toy-Shops in London, as well as many other Commodities for such Kind of Experiments.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

Ozamon, about a Century since, published, in his Mathematical Recreations, the Manner of doing this Trick; it is known by all Conjurers by the Name of *My Grandmother's Beads*, from their using little Balls instead of Rings: To perform this Trick with Success, first double one of the Ribbons, so that the two Ends of it touch one another; do the same with the Second, and then fasten them both together, with a Thread of the same Colour round their Middle: This being previously prepared, when you are going to perform the

the Trick, give one of the Spectators the two Ends of the first Ribbond to hold, and those of the Second to another, by this Means their Eyes are deceived; each thinking he holds in his Hand the Extremities of two different Ribbons, but it is quite otherwise; for if in this Position they were to pull hard enough to break the Thread, the Ribbons would consequently separate, and the Rings fall upon the Ground: But to avoid this Accident, and to finish the Trick with Success, you must beg of them to approach one another, and ask each of them to give one of the Ends they hold; involve them together so as to make a Kot, and render to each, that which the other held before; by this Means each of them then hold the Extremities of two different Ribbons: Soon after the Cheat can no longer be perceived, the Rings which have never been passed on both Ribbons are taken off much more easily when the Thread is broken, and the Spectator who thought them really passed on both, is surprized to see them disengaged.

EXPERIMENT the Fourteenth.

The CARDS named, discovered with the Eyes blinded.

A Pack of Cards are caused to be drawn upon the Stage by somebody in one of the first Boxes: A

Woman

Woman arriving in the *Amphitheatre*, or on the Stage, at the same Instant, names all the Cards just drawn, without making the least Mistake with regard to their Colour, Number, &c.

EXPLANATION.

The Cards are disposed as we observed in the first Experiment. The Conjuror having, unnoticed, observed the Card drawn, he informs his Wife, or Agent, even at the very Instant he promises he will take particular Care he or she shall know nothing about it: he says he will not speak a Word, while his Wife names the Cards, and that the Person who holds them shall be confined to shew them to the Company, by saying this is such or such a Card, &c. It is in this last Phrase he names the Card, which is underneath; his Wife, who hears him, and who knows by Heart the Disposition of the Pack, names the Cards which follow it; that is to say, for Instance, if she is given to understand that the 19th is underneath, she names the 10th, the 17th, &c. Having mentioned the whole Pack, her Husband, who, during this Time, never speaks a Word, resumes the Use of his Speech, and begs of the Person who had chosen them, to ask what are the

D

others

others that remain un-named ; the Wife is informed by this Question, that there is not one remaining, and answers accordingly.

EXPERIMENT the Fifteenth.

The SYMPATHETIC LAMP.

This Lamp is put upon a Table ; the Conjuror gives a Signal to the Compeer to blow in a Pipe, without directing the Wind to the Place where it is laid, and nevertheless it extinguishes it immediately, as if some Person had blown it out.

E X P L A N A T I O N .

The Candlestick which bears the Lamp, contains a Pair of Bellows in its Basis, by which the Wind is conveyed straight to the Flame through a little Pipe. The Compeer, under the Stage, or behind the Curtain, in moving the Machinery, concealed under the Table, makes the Bellows blow to extinguish the Lamp in the Moment desired.

EXPERIMENT the Sixteenth.

The LITTLE HUNTSMAN.

It is a little Image about the Size of the little Turk, mentioned in the first Exp. It holds a Bow in its Hand, with an Arrow, which is shot the very Instant the Company thinks proper, and strikes a PASTEBOARD marked and placed on the Top of a Column. This PASTEBOARD is divided into several Circles, which are numbered, and the Arrow always enters a Number previously chosen by one of the Spectators.

EXPLANATION.

The Action of the Spring, which pushes the Arrow is retained for a Moment, by a Pin, which the Compeer takes off at Pleasure, in moving the Machinery, concealed in the Table. When this Pin is pushed, the Shaft flies rapidly towards the PASTEBOARD, as the Cock of the Pistol falls upon the Hammer when one draws the Trigger.

In laying the Automaton on the Table, it must be placed so, that the Arrow points exactly at one of the numbered Circles, which will be the easier done, the less this is distant from the Mark. To cause the Number to which the Dart is pointed

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to

to be chosen, forced Cards must be presented to one of the Spectators, who must, according to Art, choose the Number in Question. This depends upon a particular Address of the Conjuror, very difficult to be described by Words. However it may be said in general to consist, First, In putting the Card pitched upon under the Pack; Secondly, On keeping it always in the same Place, though one shuffles, or seems to shuffle the Cards, to make People think that neither of the Cards has been seen. Thirdly, To pass this Card into the Middle of the Pack, the very Instant it is presented. Fourthly, On making several Cards pass before the Spectator's Hand, to cause him to think he may choose either of them indifferently. Fifthly, in making these Cards pass rapidly, that he may not have Time to take any other. In fine, in slipping dexterously the Card intended into his Hand, intreating him at the same Time very civilly, in order to deceive him, to take which he pleases; for it requires no small Share of Impudence to perform Experiments of this Kind.

EXPE-

EXPERIMENT the Seventeenth.

*The Ball thrown into the little three doored House,
and issuing from either at Command.*

E X P L A N A T I O N.

An inclined Pipe, in which the Ball rolls downwards, has in its lower Part, at different Heighths, two Holes, which are shut by Valves opened by the Compeer's playing the Machinery under the Stage. These two Holes, from the opening and extremity of two other Pipes, which reach the one to the Right, the other to the Left, to two different Doors; the first Pipe reaches to the middle Door. If it be desired that the Ball should issue from the right Hand Door, the Compeer plays the Machinery to open the first Valve which the Ball meets in coming down. This Valve being open, the Ball naturally falls into the second Tube, which conveys it to the right Hand Door.

If it be desired that the Ball should pass at the left Hand Door, the Compeer, by Means of another Piece of Machinery, opens the second Valve, and the Ball passing over the first, which is shut, necessarily falls into the third Tube, which conveys it to the Door demanded. In short, if it be desired

that the Ball should come out at the middle Door, the Compeer has nothing to do; because the Ball runs directly to it, in following the first Tube, without falling into either of the two others.

EXPERIMENT the Eighteenth.

THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS; or, *The Pigeon killed, by the Thrust of a Sword, given to its Shade or Image.*

The Name of *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, is given to this Trick, because it is pretended that a Man so called killed his Brother, by stabbing his Picture with a Dagger. This Anecdote, which undoubtedly is not related by cotemporary Historians, nor by Eye Witnesses, should be considered without Doubt, as Apocryphal. However, the Trick in Question consists in fastening a Pigeon by the Neck to a double Ribbond, drawn very tight, and sustained by two Columns; and in cutting off the Animal's Head, without touching it, in the very Instant the Sword is thrust at, or drawn against the Shadow of the Bird.

EXPLANATION.

The two double Ribbons to which the Pigeon is fastened, conceal a very sharp little Steel Blade,

bent

bent in the Form of a Sickle. This Blade is fastened to a Silk String; which, passing between the two Ribbons, and through one of the Columns, reaches the Hands of the Compeer, underneath the Stage. The Pigeon's Neck should be controuled by a kind of a Silken Ring, to hinder it from advancing or retreating. He who performs the Trick, draws his Sword upon the Bird's Shadow, and at this Instant giving a hard Stamp with his Foot, as a Signal for the Compeer to draw the String, causes the Sickle, which embraces the Pigeon's Neck, to cut off its Head.

EXPERIMENT the Nineteenth.

The MAGIC NOSEGAY, blowing at the Word of Command.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

The Branches of this Nosegay may be made of rolled Paper, of Tin, or any other Matter whatever, provided they be hollow or empty. They must, in the first Place, be pierced in several Places, in Order to apply to them little Masses of Wax, representing Flowers and Fruits. Secondly, this Wax must be enveloped with some gummed Taffety, or a very thin Gold Beater's Skin. Thirdly, these Envelopings must be quickly glued to

38 N A T U R A L M A G I C: or,
to the Branches, so as to seem a Part of them, or
at least a Prolongation. Fourthly, the Colours of
the Flowers and Fruits they represent, must be
given them. Fifthly, the Wax must be heated,
till it melts, and runs down the Branches, and
Handle of the Nofegay.

After this Preparation, if you pump the Air
through the Stem of the Nofegay, the Envelopings
will of Course contract themselves, so as to appear
withered, &c. and as you blow the Wind pene-
trating into the Ramifications of the Branches,
the Envelopings, like little ærostatical Balloons,
dilate themselves so as to resume their primitive
and blowing Appearance.

To perform this Trick you must begin by
twisting and pressing lightly all these Envelopings,
and render them almost invifible, by making them
to enter into the Branches of the Nofegay: then
the Nofegay must be placed in a Kind of a Bottle,
containing a little Pair of Bellows, and of which
the moveable Bottom being put in Motion, by the
Machinery in the Table, may swell the Envelop-
ings at the Moment required.

EXPE-

EXPERIMENT the Twentieth.

The Ring in a Pistol, found afterwards in the Beak of a Turtle Dove, in a Box previously visited, and sealed up.

One of the Company is desired to put his Ring into a Pistol, loaded by one of the Spectators. An empty Box is shewn to the Company, which is caused to be shut by a third Person, who fastens it with a Ribbond, which he seals with his own Arms. Then this Box is put upon a Table, of which the Company never loses Sight; nevertheless, after having fired the Pistol, on opening the Box, this same Ring is discovered in the Beak of a Dove.

EXPLANATION.

On Pretence to shew how to handle the Pistol, the Conjurer lays hold of it, and dexterously withdraws the Ring, in the same Manner he did the Nail spoken of in the fifth Experiment. It is carried to the Compeer, who puts it directly in the Beak of a tame Dove; he then extends his Arm to the Inside of the Table, placed near the Partition, in order to open the Trap, mentioned in the Second Experiment, and puts the Bird into the Box, of which

which the Bottom opens secretly. The sealed Ribbond which surrounds the Box, cannot hinder it from opening, because it is done only by one half of the Bottom opening inside instead of outside; and great Care is before taken not to make a second turn with the Ribbond, which crossing the first, would oppose the Introduction of the Dove.

We shall not mention here the Means for making such a Box, for it would not only require a long Discourse to explain, since there is not a Joiner, Ebonist, or Cabinet Maker, of any Intelligence, who does not invent, or know, several Secrets of this Kind. Those who are desirous to perform the Experiment, may consult or see my Apparatus at *Westminster-Bridge*.

EXPERIMENT the Twenty-first.

The Coffer that opens at Pleasure.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

This Coffer contains a Puppet, whose Carcase forms a Kind of a Pudding Spring, *i. e.* a Wire wound up in a spiral Form; thus the little Image, though higher than the Coffer, may stand upright therein, when it is flaut; as its Body is contracted by

by Pressure. The Coffer leans upon the Machinery, which has a Communication with the Bolt of the Lock, and the Centre of the Table. When the Bolt is disengaged from the Staple, the above Spring finding no other Resistance than the Weight of the Lid, forces it easily to rise. This the invisible Agent can always perform in Concert with the Conjuror.

EXPERIMENT the Twenty-second.

The CARD springing up into the Air, from the Pack, without being touched.

One of the Cards is drawn, which is afterwards put in, and shuffled with the rest of the Pack ; then the Pack is put into a kind of a square Spoon, placed upright upon a Bottle, which serves it as a Pedestal, and at the Company's pleasure the Card instantly flies up into the Air.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

In the first Place, a forced Card must be chosen, in the Manner described Exp. the Sixteenth; then the Pack must be placed in the Spoon, so that the chosen Card may lean on a Pin, bent in the Form of a Hook ; this Pin is fastened to a Thread, and ascending through the Pack, leans upon the upper
End

End of the Spoon ; then it descends under the Stage, through the Table : In this Disposition, the Compeer cannot pull the Thread, without dragging along with it the Hook and Card, which causes it to be perceived as flying in the Air : The Thread slides upon the blunt Edge of the Spoon as easily as if it run in a Pully.

In order to place the Cards in the Spoon quick enough, that the Spectators may perceive no Preparation, care must be taken that another Pack is presented dexterously on the Table : The chosen Card in the other, with the Hook and Thread, must be previously prepared as above described.

EXPERIMENT the Twenty-third.

The WATCH POUNDED in a MORTAR.

A Watch is borrowed from one of the Company, which is immediately put into a Mortar : Some Moments after, another Person is desired to break it, the Wheels, the Fusee, the Spring, and the Barrel are shewn crushed and fractured : Finally, in a few Minutes after, the Watch is returned to the Lender uninjured, who acknowledges it to be his own.

EXPLA-

EXPLANATION.

In order to succeed, and produce an Illusion in doing this Trick, care must be taken to put into the Mortar a second Watch, whose Hands, Chain and Trinkets, resemble in some Measure those of the First, which is not very difficult; because we may be acquainted with the Person who lends the Watch, or address ourselves to a Person, whose Watch we have had an Opportunity elsewhere to examine.

After having replaced the fractured Watch in the Mortar, the Company must be amused an Instant with a new Trick, while all the Pieces are gathered out of the Mortar, and the first Watch placed in their Room.

EXPERIMENT the Twenty-fourth.

A Pistol loaded with Powder and Ball, and discharged at any Person, who dexterously receives the Ball on the Point of a Knife.

The Conjurer presents one of the Company with a common Pistol, some Powder, and a real Lead Ball to load. The Conjurer then, at the Distance of six Yards, desires the Person to cock

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the

the Pistol, and discharge it at him, who holds a Knife immediately, directed to the Mouth of the Pistol, and thus catches the Ball on the Point of the said Knife.

E X P L A N A T I O N.

The Stratagem in the latter End of Experiment the Fifth, is also used in the above, in which a Ball is fixed instead of a Nail, excepting that the Conjuror has a double bladed Knife; on one of which Blades is previously fixed a Ball, which is concealed by his Hand; and the Moment the Pistol is fired, this Ball is exposed to the Observance of the Audience, as if instantaneously caught from the said Pistol's Discharge. This Finesse has been happily practised by Mr. *Astley*, in the Year 1762, during the late War in *Germany*, where two of his Comrades having some Difference, they agreed to decide it by a Duel, in which he was chosen as one of the Seconds. Being assured of the Courage of the two Antagonists, he devised this Method to preserve either or both of them from being killed or wounded. He, therefore, caused a Tin Tube to be made for each Pistol, exactly corresponding with the Circumference of their Barrels. Each of these Tubes being deposited unperceived in each Pistol, upon a Charge of Powder only, the Ball was next put

put in, before the Combatants, and, thus charged, the Pistols were presented to them, while they took Care in giving the Pistols, to elevate them enough for the Tube and the Ball to slide down unperceived into the Hands of the Seconds. In this Manner these Duelists were deceived, and prevented from doing the least Injury to each other, while they very bravely discharged three Cases before they could be prevailed upon to give up the Contest. Thus did Mr. *Astley* happily preserve, most probably, the Life of one or both of his Friends, without ever acquainting them to what Means they were so much indebted for their Preservation.

This little Anecdote is related merely as an Explanation of the curious Experiment.

F I N I S.

